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# Intelligence tests

**SECRET AND PERSONAL by F W Winterbotham/William Kimber 42s**
**THE RED ORCHESTRA by Gilles Perrault, translated from the French by Peter Wiles and Len Ortzen/Arthur Barker 55s**
**A HISTORY OF THE BRITISH SECRET SERVICE by Richard Deacon/Muller 70s pp 440**

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F. W. WINTERBOTHAM'S Secret and Personal begins:

"Vicky, get me the Cabinet Offices on the scrambler, please."

"That you, Cox? May we scramble? This is Zero C speaking. Just to let you know the first bombs fell on Warsaw a few minutes ago. Yes, that's all. Don't stay up late."

It's this sort of thing that makes a prospective purchaser put a book right back on the counter. This particular book, however, happens to be one of the two kinds of books on intelligence and espionage which diplomats and intelligence professionals bother to read. If Mr Winterbotham, who, at the age of seventy, has never before written a book, wants to try his hand at journalese (even to the extent of calling Anthony Eden "a bright star in the political galaxy") who cares? As one of the most effective senior intelligence officers of the second world war, as one who deserves much of the credit for correctly estimating the strength of German air power, as the originator of spy-plane photography (some twenty years before anyone ever heard of the CIA's U-2) what he has to say is bound to be interesting.

And, despite the clichés and literary irrelevancies, his book is as compulsively readable as letters from a favourite uncle—all about his meetings with Hitler, Hess, Rosenberg and a dozen other top Nazis whom he met in pursuit of his theory that the best intelligence leads come from officials high enough in their heirarchy to be both knowledgeable and free to say what they please.

Another kind of book which can excite the professional is the study, in depth, of an operation launched by Intelligence officers who later fell into the hands of Allied interrogators, and who were given no choice but to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Several such studies have appeared over the past few years, one of which is Gilles Perrault's The Red Orchestra. By sound beatings and other inducements, the Soviets were able to get out of captured German Intelligence officers all they had learned about Soviet Intelligence operations in Western Europe during the second world war, including in particular those of "the Red Orchestra," as the principal Soviet network was known to the Germans. Later, Soviet Intelligence officers who defected to the West brought details of the Orchestra not only as seen from their participation in it, but as seen by the Germans through their penetrations.

Mr Perrault seems to have gained access to this material, much of which I thought was still secret. In addition, he has managed to interview various persons who had direct knowledge of Orchestra operations, and he has done a skilfully selective job of examining relevant manuscripts and published works. The result is a kind of "non-fiction novel" which will fascinate students of the second world war or of behind the scenes diplomacy, although it is hardly to be recommended as light bedtime reading.

For anyone seeking light bedtime reading, there is much to say for Richard Deacon's The History of the British Secret Service. Mr Deacon appears to have read every book in existence on the subject of espionage, absorbing fancy with fact, and to have added some thoughts of his own resulting from talks with retired members of the British Secret Service—a breed not renowned for their frankness on intelligence matters.

All the same, it is as good a "history" of the British Secret Service as we are ever likely to get (from Throgmorton and Walsingham to Kim Philby) and it is put together in a manner which is not only scholarly (supplementary notes, bibliography, and all the rest) but extremely interesting. As a present member of SIS told me, "It's excellent except for the parts I know about first hand, but on those it's not so good."